

House Republican Press Release

April 27, 2005
Press Office: 860-240-8700

Rep. Harkins To Reintroduce Public Safety Legislation As Amendment



Would Revoke Driving Privileges of Illegal Aliens

State Rep. John Harkins, R-Stratford, today announced he will reintroduce legislation that would revoke the driving privileges of illegal aliens in Connecticut. On Monday, April 25, the Legislature's Government, Administration and Elections (GAE) Committee voted 12-7 to defeat Senate Bill 189. The bill would strip an illegal alien's motor vehicle license once that person's right to remain in the United States expires. Rep. Harkins said he will seek an appropriate bill to amend with this legislation before the Legislature adjourns on June 8.

Rep. Harkins, who serves on the Legislature's Transportation Committee, said it is ironic that the bill passed that committee in a 27-1 vote, was not opposed by any organization and is supported by the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), yet was defeated in the GAE Committee.

The legislation would deem that the term of a non-citizen's license or state-issued identification card coincide with how long the that person lives legally in the United States and was originally introduced as part of Governor M. Jodi Rell's budget proposal. Under terms of the legislation, a lawful resident of the state is a person who is a United States citizen, permanent resident alien or a temporary resident alien authorized to work in the U.S. for a period of not less than one year from the date of applying for a commercial driver's license.

The legislation would also require that people who apply for commercial drivers' licenses present evidence they are legal state residents before being granted the license. Proponents of the measure maintain these steps should be taken to thwart potential terrorist activities.

"This legislation is a simple, safe way to protect Connecticut citizens," said Rep. Harkins, who serves as an Assistant Minority Leader. "It does not seem unreasonable to require a person to be a lawful resident of our state to obtain an driver's license for the term they are allowed to stay in this country."